

SC066242

Registered provider: Progressive Futures Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home can accommodate two young people with behavioural or emotional difficulties.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 July 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 12 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people are making exceptional progress in all areas of their lives. This has been made possible because all members of staff know and respond to each young person's individual needs.
- Young people are in mainstream school and performing in line with, or above, their peers. Educational professionals said that the young people's attendance is excellent and their progress is down to them being settled at the home and the support they receive.
- Members of staff are acutely responsive to changes in young people's health. As a result, young people receive additional support quickly.
- High levels of activities and incentive schemes have significantly reduced negative behaviour. Young people said that their progress is down to the care and attention that they receive from members of staff. A range of professionals said that, because members of staff listen to the young people well, and sort out any issues that they have, young people do not need to express themselves in a negative way.
- Although the young people do not display unsafe behaviour, the home has ensured that the young people have the knowledge to keep themselves safe.
- Young people have a range of certificates in recognition of their achievements. These include local authority awards, educational certificates and completing safety projects. These are displayed proudly in the home and they are celebrated.
- The manager has excellent oversight of the home. He takes on board advice from professionals and includes members of staff and young people in the development of the home.
- The manager has made useful contacts with a range of professionals who offer services to young people. As a result, members of staff are receiving additional training, such as conflict resolution. The young people have completed projects in child sexual exploitation, self-esteem and confidence building.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/07/2016	Full	Good
22/03/2016	Full	Good
27/11/2015	Interim	Not judged

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Both young people have been at this home for nearly a year. Prior to being placed at this home, the manager ensured that he had all the information he needed to make an informed decision as to whether the home could meet the young people's needs. An impact risk assessment was completed. The manager has recently revisited this document to determine whether he could have made any more enquires, and to consider any lessons learned from the admission process based on the findings of this document. This shows that he is always looking to develop the service. The young people have all the required local authority paperwork and supporting documents in place and these are updated regularly. Young people complete their own care plans and these inform members of staff about how the young people wish to be cared for.

At first, young people came to this home with a variety of behavioural difficulties that included poor performance and concerns at school, going missing from care, aggressive behaviour and challenging behaviours towards adults or professionals. These issues have been addressed and young people now understand how their behaviour impacts on their progress and on others. This is because the staff team has worked extremely hard to ensure that it listens to the young people and gets additional support for them as necessary. All professionals said that the care given to young people at this home is individually tailored to young people's needs and that the young people's progress is beyond expectations.

Young people said that they loved living at this home and that they wanted to remain at the home. A professional said, 'At the beginning, she did not want to come here or stay. She has recently said, in her review, that she loves it here and wants to stay until she is eighteen.' Another professional said, 'The care that she receives here is fantastic. She has settled really well. We would normally be looking at foster care for young people of this age, but she has made her wishes known. Therefore, we have recently agreed that this is a long-term placement.'

A range of professionals were consulted, as part of this inspection. All professionals said that the care at this home is excellent. They discussed the marked improvements that young people have made in all areas of their lives. They all discussed the dedication of the staff, their ability to engage with young people, the nurturing environment, and how staff respond to young people's needs effectively. One professional said, 'If I could replicate this home, I would. We have lots of young people who would benefit from this service.'

Young people said that they were cared for well. They put their progress down to members of staff listening and acting on any issue that they have. They say that members of staff are excellent, fun, help them and give them good advice. Young people are encouraged to raise concerns and are provided with a list of organisations and telephone numbers that can help them, if they needed them. Young people identified several independent people who they could talk to, such as the independent visitor, their social workers, Ofsted and Childline. However, the young people said that they did not need to do this, as members of staff take action promptly over anything

they discuss with them. Therefore, young people have several independent avenues to discuss their care, if necessary.

Previously, both young people were struggling at school and their behaviours were causing concern. Both young people now attend mainstream school. They have made significant and measurable progress in their education. They have 100% attendance and have earned several awards and certificates. One young person is in the higher sets in all subjects at school, and the other young person is moving up steadily. Both teachers said that the young people are on course for excellent exam results. One young person's pupil's premium has been used for extra tuition in maths. The tutor attends the home one evening a week. The young person's teacher said, 'This has made such a difference and she has now moved up a set.' Another teacher said, 'I believe that her progress has been made through a combination of her own determination and the supportive boundaries and encouragement that she gets from the home, school and social care working together.' Both schools said that the home fully supports the young people's education. They commented on how the home prepares the young people for school, ensures that they have the right equipment, and that the young people complete homework when they should. Teachers said that it is clear that the home has aspirations for the children that it cares for, because staff attend all events at the school and work closely with the school on any issue. Both young people want to work in childcare when they are older. Therefore, young people are flourishing, achieving in line with their peers or above, and have ambitions for their future.

A high level of activities is offered at this home. Both young people attend dance lessons and enjoy going to the company's caravan for short breaks. One young person could not swim. The home arranged swimming lessons for her and she is now a strong swimmer. Both young people enjoy swimming and go weekly. They have both recently been to a theme park to celebrate one of the young people's birthdays. The young people said it was fantastic. In conjunction with this, the home provided the young person with an additional birthday cake to take to contact, so she could celebrate with her family. A nice touch was that staff put a photograph of her family on top. A professional said, 'It's great to see her getting out. The level of activities keeps her engaged, having fun, and reduces boredom and opportunities to be involved in negative behaviour.' As a result, young people are having fun, learning new things and are involved in their community.

The young people are in excellent health. They have attended all appointments and receive healthcare when required. An outstanding area is that members of staff know the young people well and are observant of changes in their behaviour that may indicate a health concern. For example, one young person was turning the television louder and asking members of staff to repeat things. As a precaution, they took her to her GP and she now has an audiology appointment to check her hearing. Another young person was taking a prescribed medication for a personal problem. Members of staff noticed a change in her moods. They linked this to the side effects noted in the medication leaflet. A new appointment was made with her GP and a different route was offered that does not require medication. As a result, the young person is back to her normal self and the personal problem has significantly reduced. All members of staff have received medication training, health awareness, and have a first aid certificate. This means that young people's health needs are robustly monitored and action is taken promptly.

There are robust arrangements for young people to keep in contact with their family. Young people say that this is important to them and that members of staff go out of their way to make sure this happens. For example, prior to coming to the home, one young person's behaviour was causing concern. The young person said that it was because she did not see her family regularly. The young person was originally placed in foster care with her brother. This placement broke down and contact at the foster home was not possible. The manager challenged the local authority to have set arrangements and dates for the young person to see her family. The home offered to support and supervise contact between the siblings, at the home. The young person and her brother now have valuable time going out together on activities. This means that relationships are maintained and that the young person's behaviour has significantly improved.

Young people live in a well-maintained and furnished home. It is nicely decorated and young people proudly display photographs of their family and certificates throughout the home. They help with chores and help keep the home tidy and clean. This shows that young people are settled here and take pride in their home.

In conclusion, young people and professionals say that the experience and care received at this home has significantly enhanced the young people's life chances.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

A range of professionals say that the young people are safe at this home. They report that there are no concerns at present and that they were extremely confident that, if an issue was to arise, it would be dealt with swiftly and competently. All members of staff have received training in safeguarding, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and e-safety.

In discussion with the inspector, members of staff were able to draw on this training to demonstrate what action they would take, their roles and responsibilities, and how they would protect a young person if an incident was to occur. The staff team continues to look at and discuss new research and social issues within staff meetings. This ensures that staff are aware of any changes to legislation, or that they can be observant to young people's body language or changes in behaviour, such as signs of radicalisation.

Before being placed at this home, concerns were being raised around the young people putting themselves at risk. These risks were identified and a comprehensive plan was put in place for the home to address these issues. The manager ensured that the young people received external support to help them understand these concerns. Both young people attended a project that included workshops on self-esteem, confidence building, child sexual exploitation and e-safety. Young people have been able to reflect on these issues and discuss how they now do things differently. For example, one young person said that if a stranger approached you in the street, for example, you would not talk to them, so why would people talk to strangers online? To keep these topics alive, young people discuss social issues in their young people's meetings. The manager has printed off leaflets, information and documents on current events within society and young people discuss how these issues may impact on them. Examples of these issues include the recent fire at Grenfell Tower, terrorist attacks and British values. Therefore, young people's meetings are purposeful, interesting and help young people to understand

social issues. These excellent practices help young people to make sense of their world and how to keep themselves safe. More importantly, young people are not presenting with unsafe behaviour. A professional said, 'The work that this home has done has truly given her [the young person] the support and information that she needed to be able to keep herself safe.'

One young person had been reported missing to the police, prior to coming to live at this home. However, due to the excellent relationships, high level of activities, discussion and reflection of the reasons why she should not leave the home without permission, the young person has not been reported missing from this home. Excellent risk assessments show the vulnerability of the young person if she went missing, and the action members of staff need to take. These risk assessments have been compiled in line with the local authority's missing from home protocol. The home works closely with a range of independent services that address issues related to childcare. The police definitions and reporting protocols have recently changed. The home has received a document outlining these changes and it is working with the designated officer from the police to amend the young people's risk assessments.

Young people's behaviour is excellent and is not causing any concern at present. This is because there are highly effective behaviour management plans and risk assessments for addressing behaviour, in and outside of the home. A professional said, 'This is all down to the home, the nurturing environment, the respect, open and honest discussions, problem-solving and the genuine care given at this home.' Another professional said, 'She can be a little fireball, but they manage her behaviour extremely well.' Both social workers commented on the innovative distraction and diversion techniques used by members of staff to alleviate any issues. In addition to this, young people can reflect on past behaviours and how they now do things differently, such as walking away, discussing things through, or having quiet time.

One young person has recently been restrained for her own safety. There is a detailed account of the incident and the action that members of staff took. The home has not had any physical restraints in the past. Excellent oversight of this incident, by the manager, highlighted several areas of practice. The manager concluded that one new member of staff had been regimental in her style of dealing with the incident. This contributed to her not passing her probationary period with the company. Also, the young person ran out in the street and was escorted back into the home. The manager discussed with members of staff whether this was for her safety or for compliance. The manager concluded that all members of staff needed further training in this area. An external training provider was brought in to deliver a conflict resolution course. All members of staff completed this.

Young people have not received any sanctions for negative behaviour. The home's ethos is based on discussion, reward for good behaviour and celebration of achievements. As a result, young people have received personal items, additional monies, clothing grants, and trips to the company caravan and theme parks. The young people said that they are proud of their progress and enjoy all aspects of these incentives.

Young people do not report any issues around bullying. They say that, generally, they get on well with each other. There have been some incidents of bickering between them and goading each other, but over normal issues. A professional said, 'They sometimes

bicker over television channels and other things, but this is like normal sibling rivalry. I would be concerned if they didn't. The staff handle these incidents really well, intervene when necessary and they are not overly reactive to these situations.'

Several new staff have been recruited to work at the home. A new deputy manager has recently started to work here. She said, 'I am a qualified social worker and I was working for a local authority. As a social worker, I placed an extremely difficult person here who did so well. It is one of the reasons I came to work here.' Recruitment procedures are robust because all checks are fully scrutinised. This ensures that young people are safeguarded, as much as possible, from unsuitable adults.

All health and safety measures are undertaken and addressed promptly and appropriately. Young people, members of staff and visitors regularly complete fire evacuations to ensure that they know what to do in an emergency. Therefore, young people live in a safe and well-maintained environment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is effectively and efficiently managed by a longstanding, suitably experienced and qualified manager. He was registered with Ofsted in June 2010. He is very child focused and has the best interests of young people at the heart of the service. He is inspirational, confident and ambitious for young people to succeed. The manager ensures that all professionals work together to ensure good outcomes for young people. He robustly challenges professionals when they do not meet or support young people well. A new deputy manager supports the manager in his role. She has extensive experience of working with young people and is suitably qualified. There is a stable core staff team that knows the young people well. There have been some new appointments to the home, but these are to strengthen the team and to provide additional staffing to cover absences or activities. This means that the home is not reliant on agency staff and that young people get to have individual time with staff, or take part in separate activities.

The manager has high expectations of members of staff and ensures that their practice is in line with the home's ethos. New staff are required to meet these expectations and have to pass a probationary period. As a result, some members of staff have not passed these requirements. The manager said that, although they do not have any vacancies at the moment, recruitment is always ongoing as they aim to employ high-calibre staff and this can be difficult at times. This shows that the home wants exceptional members of staff to care for the young people.

The home's statement of purpose is regularly reviewed and updated. The home's ethos is apparent in the care provided at the home. It is based on mutual respect and honesty, with each day being a new day and the home instilling a nurturing environment. This is evident in the comments made by young people, teachers and professionals. All professionals commented on the excellent communication between them and the excellent progress that young people were making.

Members of staff said that they really enjoy working at this home. One member of staff said, 'It is a pleasure to come to work.' All members of staff said that this is like a normal home, that their views are listened to, that they contribute to the development of the

home, and that they are proud that their input is recognised by professionals in the excellent progress that young people are making.

Members of staff receive regular supervision and appraisal. This means that their practice and development is monitored well. Staff meetings are purposeful. The manager regularly brings government, social media and care practice articles for discussion. For example, a service called 'Action for children' has articles on meeting the Children's Homes Regulations 2015, guidance of good practice in relation to meeting the Children's Homes Quality Standards and the inspection process by Ofsted. The staff team has recently looked at and discussed the importance of young people's views and how to record them, making effective arrangements for Regulation 44 visits and adolescents and risk-taking behaviour. They team has evaluated what this means and how this impacts on the home. Therefore, the team is able to improve its practice in the home.

Members of staff have completed all mandatory training and additional training to care for young people's individual needs. The manager has outsourced several different packages of training to enhance members of staff's care practice and development, such as conflict resolution and radicalisation training. This means that staff are aware of potential risks and learn new ways of working.

Case records reflect young people's lives and the work undertaken with them to secure positive outcomes. The home recently identified that young people's files were too big. A new format has been established. As a result, old information is appropriately archived and the new files are more child friendly and accessible. Young people often comment on their care, but have expressed that this is boring and repetitive. The manager is consulting with them to try and find an acceptable level without missing their input.

Several developments are in progress around the monitoring of the home. Currently, an independent visitor visits the home and completes a report about the systems and care practices in the home. However, the company has recognised that these need to be more robust. The company has recently employed another service to undertake these visits. The responsible individual said that his initial findings have been very useful. They are currently looking at making supervision records more purposeful, with targets for development and for achieving these. Also, the old induction pack shows that the manager simply ticked when members of staff had read a policy or procedure. The new induction pack now asks questions to ensure the staff's understanding. Similarly, the manager's six-monthly report has been reviewed and the format changed. This is to show the progress that young people are making with supported evidence from meetings, consultation with professionals and young people's views. This means that the home is striving to develop and improve.

There have been no external complaints, safeguarding concerns, allegations against staff or others, that have required action or reporting to external professionals. However, the manager and members of staff were able to fully demonstrate their role and responsibilities in these areas to the inspector, if an incident was to occur.

The home can fully demonstrate the positive impact that living at this home has on individual young people's progress and life chances.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC066242

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Progressive Futures Care Limited

Registered provider address: C/o, 18a London Street, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0UE

Responsible individual: Zoe Wilkinson

Registered manager: Justin Pagan

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care inspector

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